

Illegals

The controversy continues after High Court decision

Editor:

I would first like to point out to Mr. Bernie Fette that any child born in this country, whether the progeny of an illegal alien, a naturalized citizen, or persons who, like myself, trace their family to this continent before the Revolutionary War, are citizens of this country and entitled to the full benefits and privileges thereof. I would also ask Fette who would bus his table at the country club, do the ironwork on the state's highways, and put the sheetrock in his condo if the "wetbacks" did not.

Mr. Fette may say that in the present economic situation, undocumented workers are taking jobs from "number one," as his rather childish piece suggests. On the contrary, I must contend that the jobs the illegals are filling are usually the jobs that the "birthright" Americans are unwilling to take on. The jobs that are considered, for whatever reasons, to be demeaning, dirty or simply undesirable work. Many times these jobs are performed for substandard wages, for the undocumented worker is easily taken advantage of by unscrupulous "Americans."

The pattern, sadly, is consistent with the development of this great country. From slavery, to the exploitation of the Irish, the Italians, the Chinese and now to the Mexican, many American businessmen have chosen to shamefully use new arrivals in this country for their own advancement, only to discard them when they had served their purpose.

I do not wish to be interpreted as suggesting that every refugee who desires to move to the United States be encouraged to come to this country — we are simply unable to give the world the rich and plentiful lifestyle we enjoy here. I wish we could.

It is vitally important to remember, however, that every dollar spent on the education of a youngster to enable him to take a place as a productive member of society will be returned a hundred-fold in tax revenue, and in money not spent on juvenile detention centers or CETA programs.

Remember, Mr. Fette, that we Anglos came to this country as immigrants, some expelled from their home country for criminal acts, some carted off by force to be relocated two thousand miles from friends and loved ones, and not a few by simply arriving at Ellis Island in a cramped tramp steamer.

I find it particularly disturbing that a student would demand that a fellow human being be deprived the right to an education. And as to your point about freeloaders, may I presume that you pay to the state the difference between the cost of your education and the amount you pay in tuition?

Judging by the attitudes, opinions and reasoning expressed in your column on page two of the June 16 Battalion, I would venture a guess that you may be due a refund.

David D. Martin
107 Fidelity

Editor:

I am writing in response to Bernie Fette's column headlined "Free Education for Illegals — Absurdity of the Century." Although I question several of Fette's propositions and assumptions, I am most puzzled by what appears to be his central thesis: that the children of undocumented immigrants to this country should be denied a free education, since "sometimes you just have to look out for number one." By "number one," he seems to mean the citizens of the United States.

Mr. Fette thinks that if we educate the children of undocumented immigrants, they will demand Medicare, food stamps and Medicaid. I believe that denying these children free education almost guarantees that they and their children, who will be citizens, will need these government programs and more. I'd like to suggest that it is very much in our interests as U.S. citizens that all children living in our borders, whether their parents are citizens or not, have access to free education.

Consider the alternative. If we do NOT educate these children, what will be the result? Will their parents take them back to Mexico? Almost certainly not: most of their parents immigrated here not primarily to educate their children, but to earn enough money to feed, house, and clothe them. What

will these school-age children do all day while children who "deserve" (Mr. Fette's term) an education, because their parents happen to be U.S. citizens, are in school? What will they do all day when they are 12, 15, 18 years old, unable to read and write, ill-equipped to earn a living? I believe that children so deprived are highly likely to engage in criminal activity, at staggering cost to U.S. citizens, and that they or their children are highly likely to be recipients of welfare, food stamps and the like. In short, I believe that it would be much more costly to "number one" to deny education than to offer it.

The majority of the Supreme Court (its members are not all "men," Mr. Fette) based its decision on the 14th Amendment of the Constitution, which prohibits states from denying equal protection under the law to all PERSONS. That means that the state cannot allow you to steal from your neighbor, even if he is an Iranian whose visa has expired. It means that the police may not break up a peaceful, lawful assembly, even if it's made up of Canadians. And, Mr. Fette, thanks to the Court, the schools cannot close their doors to little Maria, even if she is so "undeserving" as to have parents who entered this country illegally.

June Chase Hankins
Graduate student in English

Editor:

Free education for illegal aliens? Is this a joke? I must agree with Mr. Fette (Battalion, June 16). If we give illegal aliens an education, what else will follow? I say give because it is the legal taxpayers who will pay for their education.

In response to Mr. Vanvelzor's letter (Battalion, June 17), you did a lot of name-calling and I assume your letter had a point, but I failed to find it. Mr. Vanvelzor: do you really believe that illegal aliens pay income taxes and social security taxes? If they are illegal aliens, how did they get a social security number? If I remember right, that is paramount to getting a job and paying taxes. Also, I doubt that most landlords would knowingly rent to an illegal alien since it is illegal for them to do so. In light of this fact, rent illegal aliens do pay probably goes into the landlord's pocket and never sees the tax office. By the way, Mr. Vanvelzor, Mr. Fette's stupidity, as you so eloquently put it, does not hold a candle to yours.

Mr. R.L. Hyatt, in a letter to the editor (Battalion, June 17), said that illegal

aliens deserve a free education no matter how financially burdensome. He may want to foot the bill, but I do not feel I should be obligated to pay for the education of an illegal person.

Maybe illegal children do deserve an education, but not at my expense. There is something else to consider here. Suppose this decision causes more illegals to enter our country; this means more illegal children. If our schools cannot handle the overflow, then there will be a need for expansion — and since illegal citizens are not paying taxes, we will.

I think Mr. Fette's column made a valid point — if we offer illegal aliens a free education, it could open the door to other social programs. There is no clear solution to the problem. Obviously, the children are caught in the middle and will be the victims, whatever the final outcome. I say that because I think the battle is not over yet.

Incidentally, if they are illegal, doesn't that mean they are not supposed to be here in the first place?

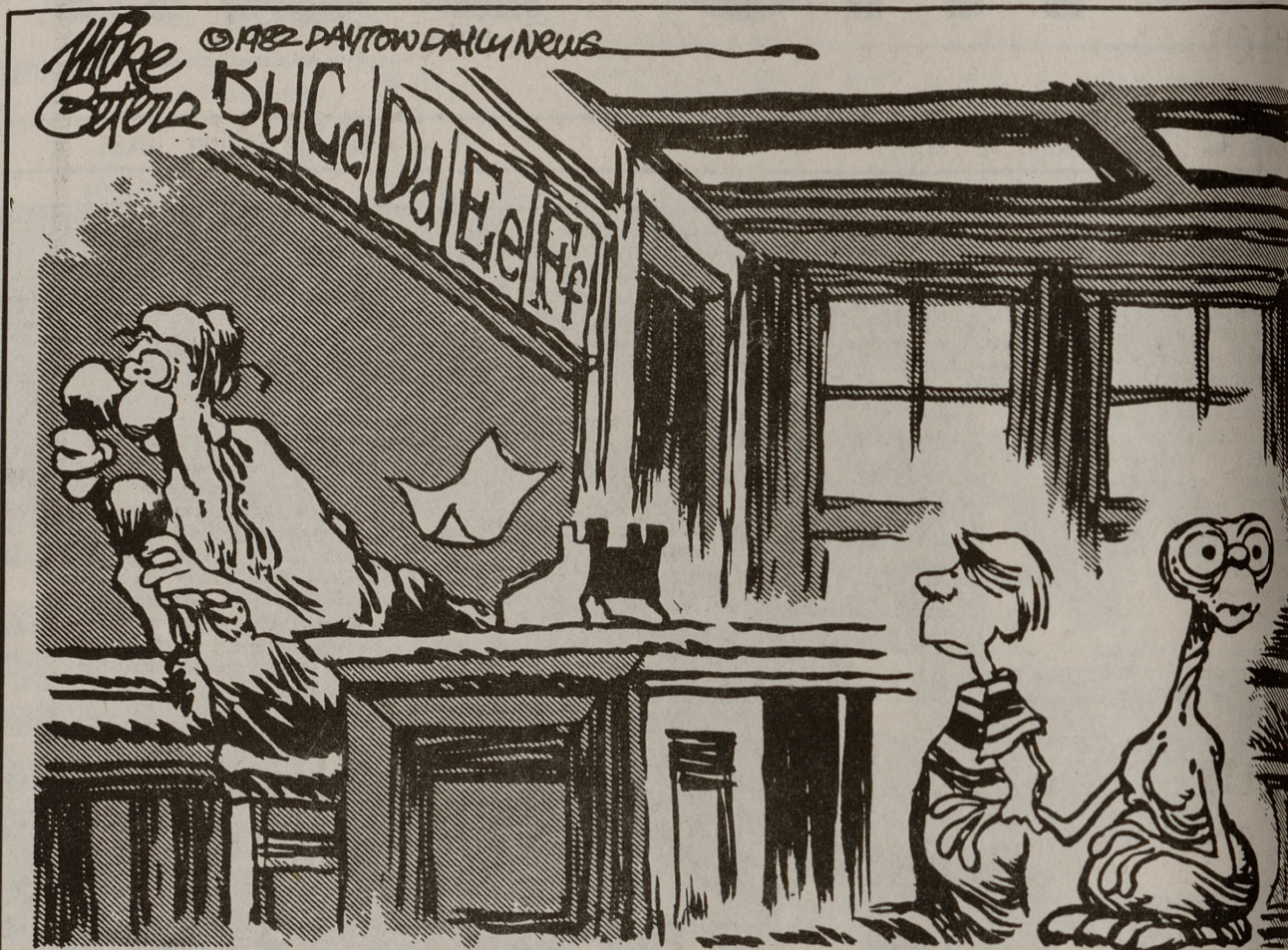
Bill Dawley
Class of '81

the small society

by Brickman



1981 King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.



QUICK, READ ME THAT SUPREME COURT RULING ABOUT ALIENS ATTENDING PUBLIC SCHOOLS...

An unusual reception held for disabled congressmen

by Wesley G. Pippert

United Press International

WASHINGTON — It was an unusual reception even by Capitol standards. The honorees were brought together by their problems — and they laughed about them.

Sen. Robert J. Dole, R-Kan., former Republican national chairman; Rep. Tony Coelho, D-Calif., chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; Sen. Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, member of both the Senate Watergate and Abscam committees; Rep. Charles Bennett, D-Fla., who has never missed a legislative roll call.

Others were feted, too — 10 in all. They were members of Congress who have a physical disability, and they were honored by a private, non-profit organization, National Office on Disability, headed by Richard M. DeVos.

The reception was held as part of the Congress-designated National Year of Disabled Persons.

Dole, 58, was wounded twice in Europe during World War II and lost use of his right arm. Always the wit, he told of being a freshman congressman on a speechmaking trip where his host kept referring to him as "Congressman Doyle."

"Congressman Doyle wanted to study

pre-med but he suffered a head injury and went into politics," the host said in his introduction.

Coelho, 40, is an epileptic. He said that during his first campaign, his opponent tried to make it an issue by wondering what would happen "if he went to the White House to see the president and had a seizure."

"A lot of congressmen go to the White House and have fits — but I'd have an excuse," Coelho said he replied. He said the opponent never brought it up again.

Bennett, 71, suffered polio while fighting as a guerrilla in the Philippines during World War II. He refused to be bound to a wheel chair or crutches and now walks with difficulty — but unaided. He was elected to Congress in 1948.

In giving advice to other of the nation's 35 million disabled, Bennett quoted from the Bible — love others as you love yourself, a commandment he said requires healthy self-esteem, and use whatever gifts God has given you.

Inouye, 57, lost an arm while serving with the highly decorated 442nd Regimental Combat Team in World War II. One of the most popular members of the Senate, Inouye said merely that often a person's disabilities are not visible.

The most visible of the disabled members of Congress is freshman Sen. James East, R-N.C., who suffered polio at age

24 and is bound to a wheel chair. He not kept him from being an active legislator, and in his first year in the Senate chaired hearings on the controversial man life bill.

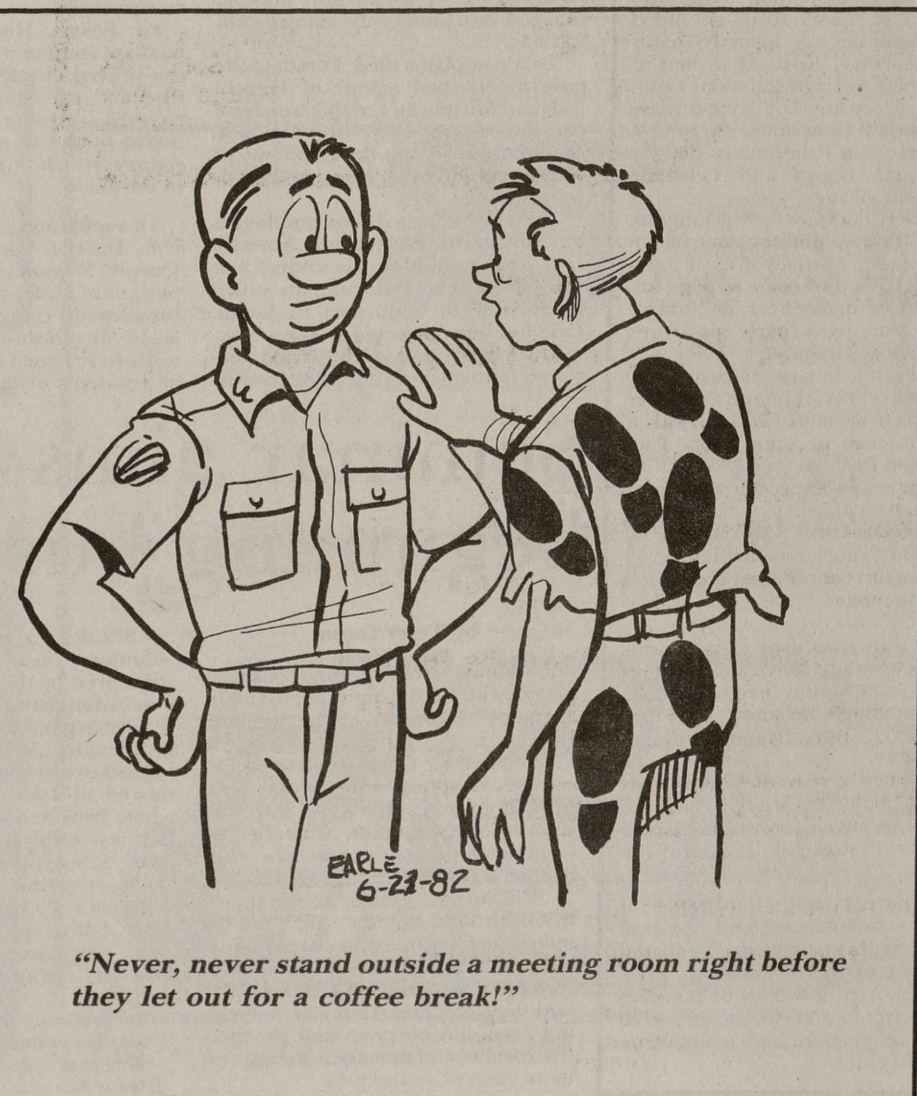
Sen. Charles H. Percy, R-Ill., chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, suffered a hearing impairment as a result of service as a gun officer in World War II. He began using a hearing aide after he came to the Senate in 1967.

Rep. Claude Pepper, D-Fla., who was elected to the Senate in 1936 and is chairman of the House Committee on Aging, also has a hearing impairment.

Rep. Morris K. Udall, D-Ariz., a professional basketball for the Denver Nuggets despite having one eye, and he memorized the eye chart to qualify for military service in World War II. Udall learned a few years ago he suffers from Parkinson's disease.

Rep. James H. Schuerer, D-N.Y., who contracted polio in his youth, and Rep. Winnie Dunn, R-Kan., had one leg amputated as a result of an accident as a teen-ager.

The reception was held in the Seward Room in the Capitol. It was attended by people, many of them disabled, including a reporter who speaks 100 words a minute despite having three fingers in a farm ensilage accident as a boy.



The Battalion

USPS 045 360

Member of
Texas Press Association
Southwest Journalism Conference

Editor: Diana Schuler
City Editor: Bernard
Sports Editor: Frank L. Chiles
News Editors:

Tracey Buchanan, Daniel
Diane
Staff Writers: Cyndy Davis, Susan
Terry Duran, Colette
Hope E. Paasch, Joe
Rebecca Zimmerman
Copy Editors: Gary Barker, Carol
Cartoonist: Scott Mc
Photographers: David Fisher, Peter

Editorial Policy

The Battalion is a non-profit, self-supporting paper operated as a community service to Texas A&M University and Bryan-College Station. Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editor, author, and do not necessarily represent the Texas A&M University administrators or faculty members, or of the Board of Regents.

The Battalion also serves as a laboratory for students in reporting, editing and photographing within the Department of Communications.

Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

The Battalion is published three times a week during Texas A&M's summer semesters, except for holiday examination periods. Mail subscriptions are \$15 per semester, \$33.25 per school year and \$35 per fall semester. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McCombs Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

United Press International is entitled to use for reproduction of all news dispatches to it. Rights of reproduction of all other matter are reserved.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.